

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

FEA-01 ACDA-07 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-06 ERDA-05 SAJ-01

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R 091915Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2851

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

S E C R E T PARIS 20142

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC FR UR

SUBJECT: FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS AND PREVENTION OF
NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS AGREEMENT

REF: PARIS 19793

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SUMMARY: DURING COURTESY CALL BY AMBASSADOR STOESSEL,

VISITING PARIS ON LEAVE, FOREIGN MINISTRY'S POLITICAL DIRECTOR GENERAL DE LABOULAYE DISCUSSED TIMING OF NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS PREVENTION AGREEMENT IN CONTEXT OF FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS.

1. DURING COURTESY CALL ON OLD FRIEND DE LABOULAYE SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVING IN PARIS ON LEAVE, AMBASSADOR STOESSEL, ACCOMPANIED BY DCM, ASKED DE LABOULAYE FOR HIS VIEWS ON FRANCO -SOVIET RELATIONSHIP. LATTER RESPONDED WITH THE OFFICIAL LINE THAT RELATIONS WERE BASICALLY GOOD AND THE "SPECIAL" UNDERSTANDING LAUNCHED BY DE GAULLE 10 YEARS AGO WAS STILL IN EFFECT. DE LABOULAYE ADMITTED THAT TIMING OF GISCARD'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT TO PREVENT ACCIDENTAL NUCLEAR EXCHANGES MIGHT HAVE FLUSTERED THE SOVIETS. GISCARD TOLD SOVIETS ONLY 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF HIS INTENTION TO ANNOUNCE AND DID NOT SOLICIT THEIR CONSENT. DE LABOULAYE SAW VICTOR LOUIS ARTICLE (REFTEL) AS EVIDENCE OF SOVIET BUREAUCRATIC CONFUSION RATHER THAN AS FIRMLY CRITICAL SOVIET POSITION. HE THOUGHT THAT EXCHANGE OF LETTERS CONSUMMATING AGREEMENT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN 10 OR 12 DAYS.

2. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT EXCHANGE OF LETTERS FIRING UP FRANCO-SOVIET AGREEMENT WOULD TAKE PLACE BETWEEN SAUVAGNARGUES AND GROMYKO DURING PERIOD AFTER JULY 14 AND PRIOR TO JULY 29 WHEN SAUVAGNARGUES WILL BE LEAVING FOR VISIT TO JAPAN. EXACT TIMING OF SAUVAGNARGUES VISIT TO MOSCOW STILL BEING WORKED OUT.

3. AMBASSADOR STOESSEL PROBED FOR FRENCH ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET REACTION TO GENERAL MERY ARTICLE ON FRENCH FORCES PARTICIPATION IN NATO FORWARD BATTLE AREAS IN EVENT OF EUROPEAN CONFLICT. AMBASSADOR STOESSEL NOTED THAT REACTION IN MOSCOW BY SOVIETS HAD BEEN BOTH SHARP AND PAINED. DE LABOULAYE ADMITTED THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR TCHERVONENKO WAS PURSUING MANY FRENCH POLITICAL FIGURES AT LUNCHEES AND DINNERS TO INTERROGATE THEM AS TO "THE MEANING OF MERY," WHICH DE LABOULAYE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO THE "COINCIDENCE" OF MERY VISIT TO PEKING

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SHORTLY AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF HIS ARTICLE JUNE 1. TCHERVONENKO HAD CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL DE COURCEL TWO WEEKS AGO TO EXPRESS CONCERN AND ASK FURTHER EXPLANATION. DE COURCEL, WELL KNOWN FOR HIS GAULLIST VIEWS AND BACKGROUND, HAD NEVERTHELESS GIVEN TCHERVONENKO SHARP REPLY TOGETHER WITH ASSURANCE THAT MERY'S ARTICLE REPRESENTED NO CHANGE IN FRENCH DEFENSE POSTURE AND DOCTRINE. DE COURCEL HIMSELF HAD

REFERRED TO HIS GAULLIST CREDENTIALS IN THIS EXCHANGE
WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR.

4. AS CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE FOR HEALTHY STATE OF FRANCO-
SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, DE LABOULAYE SAID HE HAD RECEIVED
"THIS MORNING" MESSAGE FROM MOSCOW THAT SOVIETS INTENDED
TO GIVE HEAVY MEDIA PLAY TO PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR
ACCIDENTS AGREEMENT.

5. COMMENTS: THIS EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE
THAT FRANCO-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE NOT AS HEALTHY
AS OFFICIAL GOF LINE INDICATES.
RUSH

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